



Name: Los Primos

Location: El Cielito, Santa Barbara

Altitude: 1710-1860 masl

Average Annual Rainfall(mm): 800

Farm Size: 3.5 hectares

Process: Washed

Variety: Pacas

About

Manuel currently alternates between a life in Houston, Texas, where he works for a bus company, and his life as a coffee farmer in El Cielito, Santa Barbara. He spends 10 months of the year in Texas and 2 months in Santa Barbara. Manuel was born in the village of Nueva Esperanza, nearby Santa Barbara, where he initially learned about and worked in coffee production. He moved to the US in order to pursue other work and in recent years decided to work and invest in coffee production once more.

He has since planted Los Primos, motivated and influenced by friends working with specialty coffee. He began to notice and hear about the success of friends and neighbouring specialty coffee farmers around the region. 2014 marks Los Primos' first harvest and Manuel is already planning ahead, planting another three hectares

of the pacas variety on his land.

Background

Since the beginning of our work in Santa Barbara, Honduras, which started before CCS even existed through our sister-company KAFFA Oslo (a roaster), the relationships we've developed within this region have been some of the strongest and most exciting of all the relationships we have in all the coffee origins we work with.

What started out as purchasing coffee from a mere handful of farmers has expanded to our working with almost 40 producers across 4 municipalities. And the growth is only increasing, which is good since a high demand for these coffees have developed over the years. Still, there is more demand than there is supply and we still need to be scrutinizing and picky to get the really good stuff. The great news is that more and more farmers are becoming ambitious and know what the market is demanding.

Santa Barbara is an area that has, over the years, become recognized namely by some of the very same producers we have developed close ties with. And more broadly, Honduras has made a strong name for itself in the coffee world. For example, in this year's Cup of Excellence (2016), Honduras was put on the map as an origin that has a variety of varieties that now include geisha. Some of these coffees are scoring the high 80s and are even reaching 90s, thus fetching historically high auction prices (worldwide) at +\$120/lb.

There are three major developments that we are excited about sharing with respect to our work in Santa Barbara (SB) this year:

1) A new price agreement

We have raised the bar and so necessarily, the price. The fact that the market is still low should not matter to the long-standing and loyal producers of the greatest coffees around.

Our goal always from the beginning is to only buy 86+ point coffee. Practically, some of the lots we have purchased from SB have been at 85 points. In agreeing to work with someone long-term, there needs to be support even and, perhaps especially, during the times that not all the factors are at their optimal.

Today, we happily report that there are more 86-point coffees than ever before and consequently, we are raising prices for the considerable efforts made. We are paying more than ever. On the other hand, if the coffees are less than 86, we are also paying less.

The prices this year range from \$3.00/lb to \$4.50/lb FOB and in today's market, these prices are very high. Our farmer partners not only expressed gratitude for our continued relationship and support but they are re-investing in land, facilities, their families and their children's education. Some of the farmers we've worked with longest are truly prospering.

2) Deforestation is not accepted!

The demand for coffee has pressured/tempted an increasing number of farmers to cut adjacent natural forest in order to plant more coffee. The consequences of these practices

are devastating and we have expressed a strict opposition to this. To be clear, CCS will not buy coffee from newly deforested areas and we've met with the mayor of one of the municipalities in order to show even more strength and support for this message.

3) Processing: drying & shade

As we've come to learn, one of the key factors in making good quality coffee is processing. It is also clear that the process itself, and the drying stage in particular, is making for a more or less long-lived cup quality. This is becoming increasingly important in SB as the international recognition for the area rises and the prices go up.

Roasters need for green coffee to keep up their quality months after arrival. A fading coffee feels demoralizing to all of us and is oftentimes not an understood or experienced phenomenon by the farmer. Some are educating themselves about this and taking the need for solutions seriously.

As a general rule our partners have been implementing slower drying of the parchment under shade in order to protect it from direct sunlight during the first steps of the drying process. This has proven favorable.

Although this is currently one of the investments we are seeing in the field, just four years it was rare to see farmers drying their own coffee in the first place. These days, some are very proud of their being masters of the processing craft.